

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 28, 2014

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**TAKE PRECAUTIONS TO STAY HEALTHY AND SAFE DURING WINTER WEATHER**

*~ Stay inside as much as possible to keep warm ~*

*~ Heat your home safely to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning ~*

**Gulf County** – The Florida Department of Health in Gulf County urges Floridians, especially those residents and visitors in the Panhandle, to take precautions to stay healthy and safe during extreme cold weather. With wind chills forecasted anywhere from 20 – 25 degrees this week in north Florida, it is important to take extra precautions.

“Extreme cold weather can cause serious health issues,” said Marsha Lindeman, ARNP, MSN, Administrator of the Florida Department of Health in Franklin & Gulf Counties. “Taking simple precautions like limiting outdoor activity, heating your home safely and providing warm shelter for pets will ensure you and your family remain healthy and safe.”

**Tips include:**

- Stay indoors as much as possible to keep healthy, safe and warm. Make sure to check on elderly family members and neighbors.
- For outside activities, dress in multiple layers of loose-fitting clothing. Don't forget to wear a hat, scarf and mittens, or other winter gear.
- Heat your home safely. If you plan to use a wood stove, fireplace, or space heater, be extremely careful. Make sure each appliance is properly adjusted and you have followed the manufacturer's instructions and local building codes for use.
- Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning by never using generators, charcoal grills or gas grills indoors.
- As temperatures dip below freezing, leave your home's water taps slightly open so they drip continuously.
- Eat well-balanced meals to stay warmer. Do not drink alcoholic beverages—they cause your body to lose heat more rapidly. Instead, drink warm beverages such as hot chocolate or tea to help maintain your body temperature. If you have any dietary restrictions, consult your doctor.
- Bring animals and pets out of the cold weather and provide them warm shelter.

For more information, get your copy of the Florida Department of Health Emergency Preparedness Guide at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/preparedness-and-response/prepare-yourself/current-hazards/hurricane-info.html>.

The Florida Department of Health protects, promotes and improves the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts. Follow us on Twitter at @HealthyFla and on Facebook and visit [www.FloridaHealth.gov](http://www.FloridaHealth.gov).

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**Florida Department of Health**

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